ALABAMA BAPTIST HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MINUTES

. . OF THE . .

Florence - Baptist - Association

Held with Bluff Creek Church, Gravelly Springs, Ala. . .

August 14 and 15, 1896.

Partial Minutes of 1895 Included.

W. S. BROWN,
Moderator.

H. C. GILBERT,
Sec'y and Treas.

Will Meet Next Year with Liberty Baptist Church, Threet, Ala., Friday Before the First Sunday in August, 1897.

Statistical Table, 1895-6. . .

Name of Church.	Pastor.	Clerk.	Clerk's Post Office.	No. Last Report	Increase.				Decrease				Present Church Membership.	No. Taking Denominatial Paper.	Sunday School.		Contributions.							
					Baptism	Letter	Statement	Restoration	Letter	Exclusion	Erasure	Death			Officers and Teachers.	No. of Pupils.	Orphan's Home.	Ministerial Education.	Associational Missions.	State Missions.	Home Missions.	Foreign Missions	Church Expenses.
Florence	W. S. Brown	A. B. Mason	Florence	98	31	22			5	2	3	3	138	10	8	138	$	$	$25 06	$12 05	$ 6 29	$17 07	$ 636 70
Liberty	J. O. A. Pace	John L. Austin	Threet	78	18							1	105		5	43		8 90	10 05	19 20		25	81 64
Union Grove	F. G. Posey	Cassander Urban	Atlas	43	7	1		1				2	53	1					1 00				7 00
Bluff Creek	J. O. A. Pace	J. W. Cannon	Gravelley Springs	36						1		1	34		2	12			1 35				6 75
New Hope	F. G. Posey	Robert Jackson	Centre Star	14	7	4							25		5	25			12 00				19 55
Brush Creek	J. O. A. Pace	P. W. Wright	Wright	28								1	20										18 40
Pilgrim's Rest	W. J. N. Wylie	J. L. McIntyre	Oakland	10									10										15 65
Martindale	B. F. Wilson	E. J. Baggett	Covington	10																			

Note.—No report from Pleasant Valley or Berea. Florence Sunday School raised $55.63 for literature.

Ordained Ministers. . . .

W. S. Brown, Florence.

W. J. N. Wylie, Gravelly Springs.

J. A. Weems, Centre Star.

F. G. Posey, Lexington.

B. F. Wilson, Covington.

J. O. A. Pace, Threet.

Minutes

OF THE

Florence Baptist Association.

FRIDAY MORNING, AUGUST 2, 1895.

The Florence Baptist Association met August 2, 1895, with New Hope Baptist Church.

Rev. A. E. Burns, State Evangelist for the Tennessee Valley District, preached the annual sermon from Proverbs. xi. 13; theme: "Wisdom in Soul-Winning."

AFTERNOON SESSION.

The Association was called to order by the Moderator, Rev. W. S. Brown, of the Florence Baptist Church.

Letters were read and delegates enrolled from the following churches:

Florence—Rev. W. S. Brown, H. C. Gilbert, Robert Perrin, Mrs. W. S. Brown and Miss Edith Bellamy.

Liberty—C. S. W. Paulk, Ed Paulk, J. W. Austin and Rev. J. O. A. Pace.

Bluff Creek—Rev. W. J. N. Wylie, S. L. Jordan, Arthur Ohandler and Charley Parham.

Union Grove—Rev. T. S. Leavell, Cassander Urban, Harrison Gardner and B. G. Gray.

New Hope—John Butler, Calvin Lamar, R. E. Jackson, and B. F. Wilson.

Pilgrim's Rest—J. T. Haddock.

Martindale—E. J. Baggett, D. M. Jackson and J. A. Weems.

New Hope Church was admitted to full membership in the Association.

Rev. A. E. Burns, representative of the *Alabama Baptist* and of the State Mission Board; Rev. J. O. Pace, of Birmingham, and A. J. Ivie. of Sheffield, Muscle Shoals Association, were cordially invited to seats with us.

The Woman's Mission and Aid Society of the Florence Baptist Church, was represented by Sister Emily Josephine Brown, and the Young People's Union by Miss Edith Bellamy and Robert Perrin.

The Committee on Temperance, through its chairman, Brother Robert Perrin, next reported.

On Friday night our talented young brother, Rev. J. O. Pace, preached from Psalms cxix.

SATURDAY, 9 A. M.

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. T. S. Leavell. Psalms xxxiii.

Reports on Obituaries, Associational Missions, State Missions, Home Missions, Foreign Missions, and Woman's Work were read in the order named and adopted.

The following pledges were made for next year:

Bluff Creek	$ 3 00	Pilgrim's Rest	$ 1 00
Florence	24 00	Liberty	10 00
T. S. Leavell	1 00	New Hope	12 00
B. G. Gray	1 00	T. J. Haddock	50
Cassander Urban	1 00	Miss Edith Bellamy	1 00

Total, $54.50.

A motion was made by Brother Wylie to change the time of meeting to Thursday before the fourth Sunday in August. H. C. Gilbert substituted Thursday before the third Sunday in August which was adopted.

Rev. W. S. Brown was elected delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention with Rev. J. O. Pace as alternate.

Rev. J. O. A. Pace was selected to deliver the annual sermon.

Saturday night Rev. W. J. N. Wylie preached an excellent sermon from I Cor. iii, 11—"Christian Foundation."

SUNDAY, 9:30 A. M.

Devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. J. O. Pace, Psalms i.

The Sunday School report was then read by Brother C. S. W. Paulk.

The report of the B. Y. P. U. was read by Miss Edith Bellamy and discussed by herself and others.

The last service of the Association, with the exception of an afternoon meeting conducted by Rev. J. O. A. Pace, was a sermon by Rev. A. E. Burns, of Huntsville; text: Psalm ii and Luke xxiv; theme: "Missions." This was a great occasion. Brother Burns illustrated the sermon with a missionary map. The congregation was too large for the house and the meeting was held in the grove adjoining the church. The sum of $5.28 was collected and paid to Rev. A. E. Burns for Foreign Missions.

Association adjourned. H. C. GILBERT,
Secretary.

W. S. BROWN,
Moderator.

REPORT ON FINANCE.

NAME OF CHURCH.	MINUTES.	MISSIONS.
Pilgrim's Rest	$ 25	$ 1 00
Bluff Creek	50	3 20
Liberty	1 31	10 00
Martindale	20	40
Union Grove	60	35
Florence	5 00	12 50
H. C. Gilbert		50
Mew Hope		1 94
Pleasant Valley		70
Brush Creek		1 75
TOTALS	$ 7 86	$32 34

ROBERT PERRIN, Chairman.

TREASURER'S REPORT.

Received from former Treasurer		$20 00
" for Minutes		9 62
" for Missions		32 34
Paid State Board of Missions	$20 00	
" Associational Missions	32 34	
	$52 34	$61 96

Balance on hand $9.62.

H. C. GILBERT. Treasurer.

Minutes

OF THE

Florence Baptist Association.

FRIDAY MORNING, AUGUST 14, 1896.

The Florence Baptist Association met with Bluff Creek Church at Gravelley Springs, Rev. W. S. Brown, Moderator, in the chair.

The devotional exercises were conducted by Rev. W. J. N. Wylie.

The following delegates were then enrolled:

Bluff Creek—Rev. W. J. N. Wylie, J. W. Cannon, Rev. J. O. A. Pace.

Florence—Rev. W. S. Brown and H. C. Gilbert.

Brush Creek—Joe Wesson.

Union Grove—B. G. Gray, Cassander Urban and John English.

Pilgrim's Rest—J. W. Haddock.

New Hope—R. E. Jackson.

Liberty—C. S. W. Paulk and John L. Austin.

NOTE.—*Delegates from the Florence Missionary Woman's Society: Mrs. W. S. Brown and Miss Edith Bellamy. A letter was received from Martindale Church but no delegates were present. No letters from Pleasant Valley, Berea or Mount Moriah.*

Rev. W. S. Brown was re-elected Moderator, and H. C. Gilbert, Secretary and Treasurer.

Rev. J. O. A. Pace, as per appointment made last year, preached the annual sermon; I Cor. xv, 48. Brother Pace has the heartfelt sympathy of the entire Association on account of the loss of his noble son, Rev. J. O. Pace.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

After singing, and prayer by Brother C. S. W. Paulk, the church letters were read, questions asked about them and general information gathered from the different fields.

The regular committees were appointed by the Moderator.

Preaching Friday night by Rev. W. S. Brown, Acts ix, 6: "What Wilt Thou Have Me To Do?"

SATURDAY MORNING.

The Association was led in prayer by C. S. W. Paulk.

The minutes of yesterday were read and approved.

Motion was made by Rev. W. J. N. Wylie to have the constitution and by-laws printed in the next minutes if sufficent funds are on hand. Carried.

The following reports were read and adopted:

TEMPERANCE:

Your committee on Temperance beg leave to report as follows: It is not possible for us to denounce in strong enough terms the saloon and distillery. We might say that they are our greatest enemies, physically, socially, and spiritually. No man who drinks has the vigor and vitality that

would be his did he not drink. No community can do as well with these monster evils in its midst as without them. No soul that resides in a drunkard's body can love God and be loyal to him. Then, if the saloon and distillery are public enemies, is not the farmer, who knowingly sells his fruit and grain for the purpose of making whiskey, participating in the same crime and also guilty? We are marching under a General who knows no defeat, then let us press forward fearlessly in fighting this evil everywhere, in the home in the Church and at the ballot box. A man in an intoxicated state is not good for anything. He is worthless as a citizen, worthless in his community, and worthless in the church.

Respectfully submitted. C. S. W. PAULK, Chairman.

This report was discussed quite lengthily by Messrs. Gilbert, Wylie, Paulk, Austin, Urban, Gray, and Brown.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

The Southern Baptist Convention has 86 missionaries in foreign fields, distributed as follows: China, 41; Africa, 6; Italy, 3; Brazil, 11; Mexico, 19; Japan, 6. The total membership in these fields is 4,296. The foreign mission board spent for missions last year $105,000. Alabama paid about $6,000 of this amount. Brethren, we ought to help in this great work by giving money toward its support. It is God's work and we are God's children; surely we should not shirk so plain a duty. Some of the strongest minds and noblest characters, of our denomination, have sacrificed everything in order to obey God's call for workers. Shall we not obey the call for money to support them? God will bless our small amounts, if we give in proportion to our ability, just as much as the larger amounts of those more able to give. It is the spirit of giving that he honors and blesses. Let us prove that we have that spirit. H. C. GILBERT, Chairman.

Discussion by Messrs. Gilbert, Wylie and Brown.

HOME MISSIONS:

We, your committee on Home Missions, beg leave to submit the following report: The object of the Home Mission Board is to assist in the work of spreading the Gospel where feeble hands are struggling to advance Baptist doctrine. As we look at the spiritual condition of our country we see great cause for concentrated effort in our churches. It seems that there is a greater demand for instruction along the line of mission work, than has ever been known.

We believe that if our churches more fully understood the home mission plan they would contribute much more liberally. We must educate along this line- God's people are always ready to work when they know what to do. Preach it from the pulpit, teach it in the Sunday school, and teach it in the family, then we will succeed. God help us to teach it! I wish to emphasize that what we need is more education in the cause of missionary work. We see from last year's report that there were 425 missionaries employed by the Home Board. Those missionaries reported 5,721 baptisms; an increase of 1451 over the previous year. The increase of missionaries is about twelve per cent. and that of baptisms thirty-three per cent. Let us arouse from our state of lethargy and take fresh courage from this gratifying report and roll the missionary cause to the front.

Respectfully. JOHN L. AUSTIN, Chairman.

Discussion by Messrs. Austin and Gilbert.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Opened with prayer by Rev. J. N. Wylie.

Reports of committees continued.

STATE MISSIONS:

It is gratifying to report progress and improvement in our state mission work. There are seventy associations in this state. These associations are now divided into six mission districts, and it is the purpose of the state board to put one evangelist in each of these districts. Rev. A. E. Burns, of Huntsville, is our missionary for the northern district of the state. At our last meeting we asked for an appropriation of $300 from the state board for mission work in this association, but that board could not render any assistance to us. Rev. W. S. Brown, of Florence, is doing all he can in this association without neglecting his home field. He has a regular mission station at East Florence, where he holds prayer meeting once a week and preaches twice a month. We urge our people to inform themselves about all the undertakings and interests of the state board. We have two schools, the Judson Female Institute at Marion and Howard College at Birmingham, and must help to pay off the present heavy mortgage on the latter, as well as to send our children either there or to the Judson. The state board has a colportage department at Montgomery. All kinds of

books and papers and bibles can be bought there and the profits go to the mission work in the state. We have also an Orphanage at Evergreen, which has done much good during its short existence and needs our constant support. Brethren, let us not be satisfied with what has been done, but strive to do more and more every year of our lives.

Respectfully submitted. W. S. BROWN, Chairman.

A voluntary collection of $1.45 was handed to the Secretary for the Orphanage.

ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONS:

Report of Rev. J. O. A. Pace, missionary:

Dear Brethren:—I began work in your association one year ago and kept up regular appointments at New Hope, Gravelley Springs and Wrights. I preached twelve sermons at other points in different portions of the Association. Have traveled 820 miles, preached 74 sermons, delivered several exhortations, made several Sunday school talks and baptized 24. Papid on salary: by New Hope church, $19.95; by Bluff Creek church, $8.10; by Brush Creek, $18.40; by Florence, $24,00; by the State Mission board, in books, $50; Received from Liberty church, $78.00; total, $189.95.

This report was discussed by Brethern Brown and Wylie.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS.

The report was postponed until Sunday morning.

WOMAN'S WORK.

It is an important and forceful fact, that the women are as much a power in the church as at home. In those churches where they have been organized, they have shown themselves a force almost unequalled. The Woman's Missionary Union last year, (closing May 9th) raised for Home Missions, $33,542.64; Foreign Missions, $22,699.55; in all, $56,242.19. Of this amount Alabama women raised $3,560; this year they are asked to raise $3,100. One of the efforts of this Union is to support the women missionaries on the fields of labor. One of these, Miss Willie Kelley, now in China, was formerly a student in the State Normal College at Florence. Then these societies help no little in church work such as building and home missions. In Florence the Women's Society raised most of the church debt and are now

undertaking a large share in the new mission building that is about to be erected. Every church in the Association is requested to organize a Woman's Society.

EDITH C. BELLAMY, Chairman.

This report was discussed by Rev. W. S. Brown.

OBITUARIES.

There have been five deaths in our body since our last meeting, as follows: Liberty, Sarah Dowdy; Union Grove, Rev. Thomas Leavell and Mrs. Thomas Leavell; Florence, Tallie S. Garrett and Rev. J. O. Pace. The death of our young Brother Pace was peculiarly sad and distressing. He was just budding into usefulness and the promise of a full rich harvest of souls was just ahead of him. We believe that the influence of his noble Christian character will be felt and realized by all within the bounds of the Association for many years to come. We pray God's blessing on the bereaved family. W. J. N. WYLIE, Chairman.

Discussion by Wylie, Gilbert and Brown.

Having received a cordial invitation from Liberty church the Association agreed to meet there next year.

On motion it was agreed to meet Friday before the first Sunday in August, 1897.

Pledges for next year (if missionary comes): C. S. W. Paulk, $5.00; Pilgrim's Rest, $2.00; Bluff Creek, $5.00; Brush Creek, $2.00; Joe Paulk, $5.00; New Hope; Union Grove; Florence.

NOTE.—*The last three agreed to notify the Secretary at an early date how much their Churches would give.*

Rev. W. S. Brown, with H. C. Gilbert, alternate, was selected as delegate to the Southern Baptist Convention.

The delegates to the State Convention are Rev. W. S. Brown, Rev. W. J. N. Wylie and C. S. W. Paulk.

Rev. W. S. Brown was appointed to deliver the next annual sermon.

John L. Austin was selected as correspondent to Indian Creek Association.

Resolutions of thanks were given to the good people of Gravelley Springs for their generous and delightful entertainment so freely given to all members of the Association.

SUNDAY MORNING.

In the absence of Rev. J. O. A. Pace, chairman of the committee on Sunday schools, Rev. W. S. Brown gave an earnest talk to the congregation upon the importance of having a Sunday school in every church.

Rev. W. S. Brown preached at 11 a. m. from Solomon's Songs, ii, 15; at 2 p. m., from 2 Corinthians, v, 14.

Association adjourned. H. C. GILBERT,
Secretary.

CONSTITUTION.

PREAMBLE.--We, the representatives of Baptist churches in Lauderdale and adjoining counties in Alabama, having been regularly baptized upon profession of our faith in Christ, and being convinced of the necessity of co-operation among churches in order to advance the cause of Christ, perpetuate union and maintain correspondence with each other. agree to keep the order an rules of an Association as follows:

ARTICLE 1. The Association shall be composed of delegates, chosen by the churches to which they belong, who, on presenting certificates of appointment. shall be entitled to seats.

ARTICLE 2. Delegates thus chosen and convened shall be known as the Florence Baptist Association, which shall have no coercive power over the churches, nor infringe their internal rights. Nevertheless, the Association reserves the right to withdraw fellowship from any church proven to be heretical in doctrine or immoral in practice.

ARTICLE 3. Letters from churches shall give the names of ordained ministers, the increase by baptism, letter, experience and restoration, the decrease by letter, exclusion, erasure and death, also the total membership, the number in the Sunday school, including teachers and officers.

ARTICLE 4. Every church shall be entitled to from two to five delegates as may be convenient to attend.

ARTICLE 5. Orthodox and orderly* churches, petitioning by letter and delegates, may be received by the Association, and such reception shall be manifested by the giving of the right hand of fellowship by the Moderator.

ARTICLE 6. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by the rules of order as given in Mell's Parliamentary Practice, but the bible shall be the standard of appeal on question of doctrine.

ARTICLE 7. The Association shall elect by ballot at each annual meeting a Moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, who shall hold their respective offices until the next annual meeting of the body is organized.

ARTICLE 8. The Association shall supply the churches with minutes of its proceedings, provided there is sufficient funds on hand for said purpose.

ARTICLE 9. The body may appoint as many boards or committees as may be necessary to carry on the business and to accomplish the objects of the Association, and the executive committee shall consist of five members including the officers of the Association.

ARTICLE 10. The Association shall not adjourn until the work is finished except in extraordinary cases.

ARTICLE 11. The minutes of the Association shall be read by the Clerk, corrected if necessary, and attested by the Moderator and Clerk, before the Association adjourns.

ARTICLE 12. The Association shall, at all times, be governed by a majority of the delegates present, which majority shall constitute a quorum, (except in alterations or amendments to this constitution.

ARTICLE 13. This constitution may be altered, if found necessary, only by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

**To be orderly the representatives of the church must pledge themselves to require "gospel steps" in matters of discipline.* — *Matthew xviii, 15-18.*

Report on Finance. . . .

Name of Church or Individual.	Minutes.	Missions.
New Hope	45	
Brush Creek	1 00	
Pilgrim's Rest	60	
Liberty	1 35	
Florence	2 50	7 79
Bluff Creek	60	
Union Grove	1 00	
J. J. Paulk	10	25
Cassander Urban		1 00
Mrs. A. J. Hamm		50
Totals	$7 60	$9 54
Public Collection (Sunday)		1 60
		$11 14

C. S. W. Paulk, Chairman.

Balance on hand from last year			$ 9 62
Received for Missions			11 14
" for Minutes			7 60
" for Orphan's Home			1 45
Paid Rev. J. O. A. Pace, account Associational Missions	$ 9 29		
" W. S. Brown, account State Missions	1 85		
" " for Orphan's Home	1 45		
" " for Minutes	14 40		
	$26 99	$29 81	
Balance on Hand			$2 82

Note.—This table does not include the amounts paid during the year for Missions, etc., by the different churches.

H. C. Gilbert, Treasurer.

Order of Business: . . .

1. Call to order.
2. Devotional exercises.
3. Reading of Church letters.
4. Election of Officers.
5. Admission of New Churches.
6. Receiving visitors and correspondents.
7. Annual Sermon
8. Appointment of the following Committees, (others if necessary):—(a) Devotional; (b) Finance.
9. Reading the Constitution.
10. Reports of Standing and Other Committees:—(a) Obituaries; (b) Temperance, (c) Missions—Associational, State, Home, Foreign; (d) Sunday School; (e) Woman's Work; (f) Executive; (g) Finance Committee.
11. Treasurer's Report.
12. Selection time and place of next meeting.
13. Election of Delegates to State and Southern Baptist Conventions.
14. Appointment of Corresponding Delegates.
15. Election of Preacher to deliver next Annual Sermon.
16. Resolutions of Courtesy and Miscellaneous Business.
17. Adjournment.

Standing Committees: . . .

EXECUTIVE—W. S. Brown, H. C. Gilbert, Joe Wesson, J. O. A. Pace, John T. Ashcraft.

TEMPERANCE—J. O. A. Pace, J. W. Cannon, Joe Wesson.

OBITUARIES—John L. Austin, J. W. Haddock, H. C. Gilbert.

ASSOCIATIONAL MISSIONS—C. S. W. Paulk, Joe Wesson, W. S. Brown

STATE MISSIONS—H. C. Gilbert, B. G. Gray, Cassander Urban.

HOME MISSIONS—W. S. Brown, R. E. Jackson, C. S. W. Paulk.

FOREIGN MISSIONS—John L. Austin, John English, B. G. Gray.

WOMAN'S WORK—Mrs. E. J. Brown, Miss Edith Bellamy, Mrs. Fay E. Hazen.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS—John T. Ashcraft, J. W. Haddock, W. J. N. Wylie.